



The Riverman

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Edward White

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(Continued.)

"It's not bad," said Orde hope-
fully. "There's nothing surer than
timber. What do our earnings figure
anyway?"

"We're driving 150,000,000 at a profit
of about 60 cents a thousand. That's
\$90,000—in five years \$450,000. We
ought to clean up \$5 a thousand on
our mill. That's about a hundred thou-
sand on what we've got left."

"And that little barge business nets
us about twelve or fifteen thousand a
year."

"For the five years about \$90,000
more. Let's see—that's a total of, say,
\$90,000 in five years."

"We will have to take up in that
time," said Newmark, "two payments
on timber, the note on the First Na-
tional, the Commercial note, the li-
abilities on the boom company—\$300,
000 all told."

"Correct," said Orde. "Good enough.
I ought to get along on a margin like
that."

He set to figuring. The results he
eyed doubtfully. Each year he must
pay in interest the sum of \$7,500.
Each year he would have to count on
a proportionate saving of \$15,000 to-
ward payment of the notes. In addi-
tion, he must live.

But Orde was fond of risks.
"Never mind. It's for Bobby," said
he to himself. "And maybe the rate
of interest will go down, and I'll be
able to borrow on the California tract
if anything does go wrong."

He stepped across the hall into Tay-
lor's office.

"Frank," began Orde immediately.
"I came to see you about that Califor-
nia timber matter. Now, what I want
is this"—He proceeded to outline care-
fully the agreement between himself
and Newmark, while the lawyer took
notes and occasionally interjected a
question.

"All right," said the latter when the
details had been mastered. "I'll draw
the necessary notes and papers."

"Now," went on Orde, producing the
bundle of papers from his pocket,
"here's the abstract of title. I wish
you'd look it over. It's a long one,
but not complicated, as near as I can
make out. Trace seems to have ac-
quired this tract mostly from the origi-
nal homesteaders and the like, who,
of course, take title direct from the
government. I want you to look it
over, to be sure everything's ship
shape."

"One other thing," concluded Orde.
"I want this investment to get no far-
ther than the office door. You see, this is
for Bobby, and nothing spoils a man
sooner than to imagine the thing's
all cut and dried for him, and nothing
keeps him going like the thought that he's
got to rustle his own opportunities.
Bobby's going to have the best education
possible. He's going to learn to be a
timberman by practical experi-
ence, and that practical experience
he'll get with other people. No work-
ing for his dad in Bobby's. I can tell
you. Then, when he's worked into the
harness a little, the old man will
take him out and show him the fine
big sugar pine and say to him: 'There,
my boy; there's your opportunity, and
you've earned it. How does Orde &
Son sound to you?'"

Taylor nodded several times.

"I believe you're on the right track,
Orde."

As Orde walked home that evening
after a hot day his mind was full of
speculation as to the immediate future.
He had a local reputation for wealth
and no one knew better than himself
how important it is for a man in debt
to keep up appearances. Nevertheless
decided retrenchment would be neces-
sary.

"Heinzman," said he abruptly, "my
partner wants to raise \$75,000 for his
personal use. I have agreed to get him
that money from the firm."

"Proceed," said Heinzman shrewdly.

"As security in case he cannot pay
the notes the firm will have to give
me his signed agreement to turn over
to me his undivided one-half interest
in our enterprise."

"Well! You want to borrow dot money
of me?" asked Heinzman. "I could
not raise it."

"I know that perfectly well," replied
Newmark coolly. "You are going to
have difficulty meeting your July notes
as it is."

Heinzman hardly seemed to breathe,
but red blazed in his eye.

"I intend," went on Newmark, "to
furnish this money myself. It must,
however, seem to be loaned by some-
one. I want you to lend this money on
mortgage."

"What for?" asked Heinzman.

"For a one-tenth of Orde's share in
case he does not meet those notes."

"But he'll meet the notes," objected
Heinzman. "You are a prosperous
concern. I know some things of your
business also."

"He thinks he will," rejoined New-
mark grimly. "I will merely point
out to you that his entire income is
from the firm and that from this in-
come he must save twenty odd thou-
sand a year."

"If the firm has hard luck"—said
Heinzman.

"Exactly," finished Newmark.

"V'y you come to me?" demanded
Heinzman at length.

"Well, I'm offering you a chance to
get even with Orde. I don't imagine
you love him."

"Vat's de matter mit my gettin' even
with you, too?" cried Heinzman.

"Ain't you beat me out at Lansing?"

Newmark smiled coldly under his
clipped mustache.

"I'm offering you the chance of mak-
ing anywhere from thirty to fifty thou-
sand dollars."

"Perhaps. And suppose this little
scheme don't work out?"

"And," pursued Newmark calmly,
"I'll carry you over in your present
obligations." He suddenly hit the arm
of his chair with his clenched fist.

"Heinzman, if you don't make those
July payments what's to become of
you? Where's your timber and your
mills and your new house and that
pretty daughter of yours?"

Heinzman winced visibly.

"I'll get an extension of time," said
he feebly.

"Will you?" countermarked New-
mark.

"Well, maybe," laughed Heinzman
uneasily. "It looks to me like a win-
ner."

"All right, then," said Newmark
briskly. "I'll make out a mortgage at
10 per cent for you, and you'll lend the
money on it. At the proper time, if
things happen that way, you will fore-
close. That's all you have to do with
it. Then when the timberland comes
to you under foreclosure you will re-
convey an undivided nine-tenths inter-
est—for proper consideration, of course,
and without recording the deed."

Heinzman laughed with assumed
lightness.

"Suppose I fool you," said he. "I
guess I jost keep it for myself."

Newmark looked at him coldly.

"I wouldn't," he advised. "You may
remember the member from Lapeer
county in that charter fight and the
\$500 for his vote. Try it on and see
how much evidence I can bring up.
It's called bribery in this state and
means penitentiary usually."

"You don't take a joke," complained
Heinzman.

Newmark arose.

"It's understood, then?" he asked.

"How so, I know you play fair?"
asked the German.

"You don't. It's a case where we
have to depend more or less on each
other. But I don't see what you stand
to lose, and anyway you'll get carried
over those July payments." Newmark
rejoined him.

Heinzman was plainly uneasy.

"If you reduce the firm's profits he
is going to suspect," he admonished.

"Who said anything about reducing
the firm's profits?" said Newmark im-
patiently. "If it does work out that
way we'll win a big thing. If it does
not we'll lose nothing."

He nodded to Heinzman and left the
office. As he entered the office of his
own firm his eye fell on Orde's bulky
form. He paused involuntarily, and a
slight shiver shook his frame—the
dainty, instinctive repulsion of a cat
for a large, robust dog. Controlling
himself, he stepped forward.

"I've made the loan," he announced.

"The banks wouldn't touch northern
peninsula," so I had to go to private
individuals."

"Don't care who deals it out," laugh-
ed Orde.

"Thayer backed out, so finally I got
the whole amount from Heinzman,"
Newmark announced.

"I didn't know he was friendly
enough to lend us money."

"Business is business," replied New-
mark.

From the moment Orde completed
the secret purchase of the California
timberlands from Trace he became an
unwitting participant in one of the
strangest duels known to business his-
tory. Newmark opposed to him all the
subtleties, all the ruses and expedients
to which his position lent itself. Orde,
sublimely unconscious, deployed the
magnificent resources of strength, en-
ergy, organization and combative spirit
that animated his pioneer's soul.

Newmark worked under this disad-
vantage: He had carefully to avoid the
slightest appearance of an attitude im-
mortal to the firm's very best propier-
ty. If the smallest incident should bring
clearly before Orde that Newmark
might have an interest in reducing
profits he would know the logic of the
latter's devious ways. For this reason
Newmark did not dare make bad sales,
backward transactions. The profits of
the first year were not quite up to the
usual standard, but they sufficed.

Newmark's finesse cut in two the
firm's income of the second year. Orde
reused himself. With his old time en-
ergy he hurried the woods work until
an especially big cut gave promise of
recouping the losses of the year be-
fore. Newmark found himself strug-
gling against a force greater than he
had imagined it to be.

The end of the fourth year found
Newmark puzzled. Orde had paid regu-
larly the interest on his notes. How
much he had been able to save toward
the redemption of the notes themselves
his partner was unable to decide.

What Orde regarded as petty annoy-
ances had made the problem of pay-
ing for the California timber a matter
of great difficulty. A pressure whose
points of support he could not place
was closing on him. Against this
pressure he exerted himself. The mar-
gin of safety was not as broad as he
had reckoned. But in any case, if
worse came to worst, he could always
mortgage the California timber for
enough to make up the difference, and
more. Against this expedient, how-
ever, he opposed a sentimental ob-
stinacy. It was Bobby's, and he ob-
jected to incumbering it.

Affairs stood thus in the autumn be-
fore the year the notes would come
due. Navigation remained open into
November. No severe storms had
swept the lakes. The barge and her
two tows had made one more trip
than had been thought possible.

The weather continued so mild that
Orde decided that they take on a load
for Jones & Mabley of Chicago.

"Did intend to ship by rail," said
he. "They're all uppers, so it would
pay all right. But we can save all
kinds of money by water, and they
ought to skip over there in twelve to
fifteen hours."

Orde departed for the woods to start
the cutting as soon as the first belated
snow should fall.

To Newmark, sitting at his desk
after Orde's departure, reported Cap-
tain Floyd of the steam barge North
Star.

"All loaded by noon, sir," he said.

Newmark looked up in surprise.

"Well, why do you tell me?" he in-
quired.

"I want your orders."

"My orders? Why?"

"This is a bad time of year," ex-
plained Captain Floyd, "and the storm
signal's up. All the signs are right for
a blow."

Newmark whirled in his chair.

"Are you afraid?" he sneered.

Captain Floyd's countenance burned
a dark red.

"I only want your orders," was all
he said. "I thought we might wait to
see."

"Then go," snapped Newmark. "You
heard Mr. Orde's orders to sail as soon
as you were loaded."

Captain Floyd went out.

Newmark arose and looked out of
the window. From the government's
flagpole he caught the flash of red
from the lazily floating signal. He
was little weatherwise, and he shook
his head skeptically. Nevertheless it
was a chance, and he took it, as he had
taken a great many others.

They entered Main street, where
there was a great banging and clang-
ing of swinging signs and a few loose
shutters. All the sidewalk displays of
vegetables and other goods had been
taken in, and the doors, customarily
wide open, were now shut fast.

"I wonder where all the farmers'
wagons are?" marveled the practical
Mina. "Surely they would not stay
home Saturday afternoon just for this
wind!"

Opposite Randall's hardware store
her curiosity quite mastered her.

"Do stop!" she urged Carroll.

"I want to run in and see what's the mat-
ter."

She was gone but a moment and re-
turned, her eyes shining with excite-
ment.

"Oh, Carroll," she cried, "there are
three vessels gone ashore off the pier!
Everybody's gone to see."

"Jump in," said Carroll. "We'll
drive out. Perhaps they'll get out the
life saving crew."

Carroll drove straight ahead until
Prince stood at the top of the plank
road that led down to the bathhouse.
Here she pulled up.

Carroll saw the lake, slate blue and
angry, with whitecapped billows to
the limit of vision. Along the shore

lay the wreckage of three vessels, and
the men harnessed old Prince into the
phaeton.

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ing, breaking and gathering again.
These did not look to be very large
until she noticed the twin piers reach-
ing out from the river's mouth. Each
billow as it came in rose sullenly above
them, broke tempestuously to over-
whelm the entire structure of their
ends and ripped inshore along their
lengths, the crest submerging as it fan
every foot of the massive structures.

"Look there—out farther!" pointed
Mina.

Three little toy ships—or so they
seemed compared to the mountains of
water—lay broadside to just inside the
farthest line of breakers. Two were
sailing schooners. These had been
thrown on their beam ends, their
masts pointing at an angle toward the
beach. Each wave broke in a deluge
of water that covered their hulls com-
pletely from sight. With a mighty
suction the billow drained away, carry-
ing with it wreckage. The third ves-
sel was a steam barge. The shore-
ward side of her upper works had
given away first, so now the interior of
her staterooms and saloons was ex-
posed to view as in the cross section
of a model ship. Over her, too, the
great waves hurled themselves, each
carrying away its spoil.

"Poor fellows!" cried Mina.

"What?" asked Carroll.

"Don't you see them?" queried the
other.

Carroll looked, and in the rigging of
the schooner she made out a num-
ber of black ob-
jects.

"Are those men up the
masts?" she
cried.

She set Prince
in motion toward
the beach.

At the foot of
the bluff the
plank road ran
out into the deep
sand. Through
this the phaeton
made its way
heavily. Already
the beach was
strewn with pieces of wreckage. The
crowd gathered at the pier comprised
fully half the population of Monrovia.
It centered about the life saving crew,
whose mortar was being loaded. A
stove-in lifeboat mutely attested the
failure of other efforts. When the
preparations were finished their chief
aimed the mortar and pulled the
string. The dart with its trailer of
line rose on a long, graceful curve.
The reel sang. But the resistance of
the wind and the line early made itself

(Continued on Page 15.)



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